

22. Unique potency of Gayathri

EMBODIMENTS of love! Man today spends his life fully preoccupied with worldly concerns. Owing to attachment to the body; he forgets his true nature, is immersed in the affairs of the body as permanent and. makes bodily comforts his goal in life. These are the things which every individual experiences in daily life. If anybody accosts a person and asks him, "Who are you?", out of his identification with the body he gives his name in reply. In answer to further questions he introduces himself as a doctor, a farmer, or student, or the like. When the enquiry goes further, he identifies himself with his nationality as an American, an Indian, a Pakistani or so on. When you examine these answers deeply, you will find that none of them gives the truth.

He got his name from his parents. It did not belong to him at birth. His identification with one or other of his professions is not true because he is not the profession.

What, then, is the truth about him? "I am the *Aathma*. That is my true Self." That is the truth. But people identify themselves with their names, professions and nationality and do not base their lives on the *Aathma*. No driver of a car identifies with the car. Likewise the body is a car and the *Aathma* is the driver. Forgetting one's true role as a driver, one is identifying one's self with the body, which is only a vehicle.

This truth is emphatically brought out by the *Gaayathri manthra*. "*Dheha budhyaath Dhaasoham*" (From the standpoint of the body, I am your instrument, your servant). "*Jeevabudhyaath Thvadamshah*" (In the context of the *Jeeva*, the individual soul, I am a spark of the Divine Thou). "*Aathmabudhyaath Thvameva-aham*" (In terms of the *Aathma* I am yourself). When one views one's self from the *Aathmik* standpoint, one is identical with the Divine. "I am you and you are me."

Our life is a three-storeyed mansion

Every man has thus three aspects. Our life itself is a three-storeyed mansion. The *Brahmacharya* (celibate) stage is the foundation of this mansion. After that, the stage of *Grihastha* (householder) is the first floor. Then you have the *Vaanaprastha* (retirement from the life of a householder) stage as the second floor. Finally, there is the stage of the *Sanyaasa* (renunciant), consisting-the third floor. Thus, *Brahmacharya* is the foundation for the other three stages of life. The safety and security of the other three floors depend on the strength of the foundation, *vis*, *Brahmacharya*. Hence, *Brahmacharya* is the basic foundation.

But, unfortunately this vital fact has been forgotten by people. They feel happy on seeing the super-structure. But the whole edifice may collapse at any time if the foundation is weak. When you feel happy at the sight of a tree and its flowers and fruits, you must be concerned about its roots. The unseen foundation is the basis for the visible mansion. The invisible roots are the basis for the visible tree. Likewise, the invisible *Praana* (Life-Breath or Force) is the basis for the visible body. *Praana* has no form, while the body has a form. There is, however, the *Aathmik* principle which confers all the potencies for the *Praana* (Life Force). It is because of the power imparted by the *Aathma* that the Life Force is able to activate the body. The body inherently is inert. It is made up of different kinds of material substances.

Three potencies in man

In the *Gaayathri Manthra* the first line is: "*Om Bhur bhuvah suvah.*" This *manthra* is assumed to refer to three worlds, the earth, the middle world and *Heaven--Svarga*, the land of the gods. *Bhu*

refers to the body. It is made up of *Pancha Bhuthas* (five great, elements). These five elements constitute *Prakrithi* (Nature). There is an intimate relationship between the body and Nature. The same five elements that are in the nature are also in the body. *Bhuvah* is the *Praana Shakthi* (Life Force) that animates the body. Even if the Life Force exists, without *Jnaana* (Awareness) the body will be of no use. It is on this account that the *Vedhas* declared: "*Prajnaanam Brahma*" (Constant Integrated Awareness is *Brahman*). It is by the presence of *Prajnaana* that the Life Force is able to animate the body. The body represents inert matter. The Life Force operates in the body as a vibration. This Vibration derives its power from *Prajnaana*, which finds expression in radiation.

Therefore, the body, the Life Force and the *Prajnaana* are all within man. The entire cosmos is present in miniature within man. It is because of these three constituents that we are able to see the cosmos and experience many other things. Every potency is within us. The external is a reflection of the inner being.

It follows from this that true *maanavathvam* (humanness) is *Dhaivathvam* (Divinity) itself. Hence, the *Vedhas* declared that the divine appears in human form. Every human being is inherently Divine, but owing to his attachment to the body he considers himself a mere man.

How did this human body get animated by the Life Force? Whence has this Life Force come? It is from the *Aathma-Shakthi* (the power of the Self). Making use of this power of the Self the Life Force carries out all activities.

Triple aspects of Gaayathri

Who is Gaayathri? Gaayathri is not a goddess. "*Gaayathri Chandhasaam maatha*" (Gaayathri is the mother of the *Vedhas*) "*Gaayantham thraayathe ithi Gaayathri*" (Gaayathri is that which redeems the chanter of the *manthra*). Gaayathri is present wherever the *manthra* is chanted.

Gaayathri, however, has three names' Gaayathri, Saavithri, Sarasvathi. These three are present in everyone. Gaayathri represents the senses. It is the master of the senses. Saavithri is the master of *Praana* (Life Force). Many Bharatheeyas are familiar with the story of Saavithri who brought back to life her dead husband, Sathyavaan. Saavithri signifies truth. Sarasvathi is the presiding deity of *Vaak* (Speech). The three represent *Thrikarana Shuddhi* (purity in thought, word and deed). Although Gaayathri has three names, all the three are in each of us as the senses (Gaayathri), the power of speech (Sarasvathi) and the Life Force (Saavithri).

Gaayathri is said to have five faces and hence is called *Panchamukhi*. Is there anybody in the world with five faces? No. In the Raamaayana, Raavana is said to have ten heads. If really he had ten heads how would he be able to lie in his bed or move about? This is not the inner meaning of this description. He is said to be ten-headed because he was the master of the four *Vedhas* and the six *Shaasthras*.

Likewise, Gaayathri is described as five-faced. The five faces are as follows. Om (the *Pranava*) is the first face. The *Pranava* Principle represents the *Ashta-Aishvarya* (eight different forms of wealth). The second face is: "*Bhur Bhuvah Suvah*." The third is: "*Thath-Savithur-varenyam*." The fourth is' "*Bhargo Dhevasya dheemahi*." The fifth face is: "*Dheyo yo hah prachodayaath*." When the Gaayathri *manthra* is understood in this way, it will be realised that all the five aspects of Gaayathri are within each of us.

Power of Gaayathri Manthra

The Gaayathri *manthra* has all the three elements which figure in the adoration of God description, meditation and prayer. The first nine words of the *manthra* - "*Om-Bhur-Bhuvas-Suvah-Thath-Savithur- Varenyam-Bhargo-Dhevasya*"--represent the attributes of the Divine. *Dheemahi* pertains to *dhyaana* (meditation). "*Dheyo yo hah Prachodayaath*" is the prayer to the Lord. The *manthra* is thus a prayer to God to confer all powers and talents.

"*Sarva roga nivaarini Gaayathri*" (Gaayathri is the reliever of all diseases). "*Sarva dhukha parihaarini Gaayathri*" (Gaayathri wards off all misery). "*Sarva vaancha phala siddhi Gaayathri*" (Gaayathri is the fulfiller of all desires). Gaayathri is the bestower of all that is beneficial. If the *manthra* is chanted, various kinds of powers will emerge in one.

Hence the *Gaayathri manthra* should not be treated casually. In our respiration process the sound of Gaayathri is embedded. That sound is a reminder of our true form. In the breathing process, there is inhalation and exhalation. In the *Yoga-Shaasthra*, inhalation is termed *Puurakam* and the exhalation is called *Rechakam*. Holding the breath is called *Kumbhakam*. When air is inhaled, the sound that is produced is '*So-o-o.*' When it is exhaled, the sound is '*Ham-m-m.*' '*So-ham, So-ham.*' (Bhagavaan demonstrated how this happens while breathing in and out). '*So*' is "that." '*Ham*' is "I". "I am that," "I am Divine." Every breath proclaims this. The *Vedhas* declared the same thing in the pronouncements: "*Thath thvam Asi*" (That thou art),

"*Aham Brahmaasmi*" (I am *Brahman*), "*Ayam Aathma Brahma*" (This Self is *Brhman*).

Gaayathri is the indweller in the heart

Don't imagine God is somewhere remote from you. He is within you. You are God. People want to see God. "*Sathyam Jnaanam Anantham Brahma,*" say the scriptures. Truth is God. Wisdom is God. Both these are present everywhere. They transcend the categories of time and place. Truth is that which is valid at all times--past, present and future. That truth is Gaayathri

Gaayathri is thus the indweller in the '*Hridhaya* (heart). *Hri-dhaya* contains the word *Dhaya* meaning compassion. There is compassion in every heart. But to what extent is it shown in real life? Very little. All the while only anger, jealousy, pride and hatred are displayed. These evil qualities are not natural to man. They are opposed to human nature.

It has been declared that one who bases himself entirely on the mind is a demon. One who bases himself on the body is an animal. One who follows the *Aathma* (the Self) is divinely endowed. One who relies on the body, the mind and the *Aathma* is a human being. Humanness is the combination of the body; mind and *Aathma*. Man should strive to ascend to the divine and not descend to the demonic or animal nature.

How to remove insecurity and secure security

From today onwards parents should teach their children stories with morals. You all know in what a chaotic condition the world is today. Disorder and violence are rampant everywhere. Peace and security are not to be found anywhere. Where is peace to be found? It is within us. Security is also within us. How is insecurity to be removed and security secured? It is by giving up desires. In the language of the ancient Bhaaratheeyas this was termed *Vairaagya* (giving up attachment). This does not mean giving up home and family and retiring into the forest. It is reduction of wants. As a householder limit your desires to the needs of the family. As a student,

stick to your studies. As a professional, adhere to the duties of your profession. Do not indulge in excesses of any kind.

In the practice of the Gaayathri *manthra*, one should realise that everything is within one and thereby develop confidence in the Self. Man today is racked by numerous troubles because he has no confidence in the Self. The aspirant on the spiritual path is bound to face the troubles caused by the six enemies, lust, anger, greed, infatuation, pride and envy. He has to overcome them.

Students! On an auspicious occasion like this, you should consider how you can lead an ideal life. Through faith in God, you have to sanctify the body. Without the body, you cannot experience the mind and the intellect. To achieve your ideals, the body is the instrument. It should be kept in proper condition. While the body is an instrument, the user of the instrument is the Self. All senses function because of the *Aathma*. The *Aathma* is the Witness to everything. It is also known as Conscious Self. It derives its sanction from the Divine. It is a fragment of the Divine. Every human being is a spark of the Divine, as declared in the Geetha. The human being is essentially Divine, but tends to forget his Divine origin.

The Gaayathri *manthra* is enough to protect the person who chants it, because Gaayathri embodies all the Divine potencies. It is an essential requisite for the young because it ensures a bright and auspicious future for them. The young students are the citizens and leaders of tomorrow. Hence, they should develop pure and noble thoughts. The parents also should foster such a development.

The meaning of Upanayanam

The *Upanayanam* ceremony is just over. The Gaayathri *manthra* has been imparted to you. You are wearing the sacred thread with three strands tied in one knot. The three strands represent Brahma, Vishnu and Maheshvara. They also represent the past, the present and future. *Upanayanam* means being near to God. Nearness to God will enable you to get rid of your bad qualities and acquire virtues.

Students! The *Vedhas* have emphasized three duties. Esteem the mother as God, the father as God and the preceptor as God. Bear this injunction in mind. Gratitude to your parents is your foremost duty. This is the lesson taught by Shri Raama.

Love your parents and remember God. When you please your parents and make them happy, your entire life will be filled with happiness.

Chant the Gaayathri as often as possible. If you chant it while you take a bath, your bath gets sanctified. Likewise chant it before taking your food. The food becomes an offering to the Divine. Develop heartfelt devotion to God.

Discourse in the Sai Kulwant Mandap, Prashaanthi Mandhir, on 23-8-1995.

A man with Bhakthi will do every act as worship of God and so the act will be done better and more efficiently, without maligning or insincerity. It will also win the grace of the Lord, and so, a

Bhaktha will be able to raise more crops and enjoy greater health and mental happiness.

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